United Nations E/AC.51/1999/L.6/Add.30

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
30 June 1999

Original: English

Committee for Programme and Coordination
Thirty-ninth session
7 June–2 July 1999

Draft report

Addendum

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Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (item 4 (b))

Section 24. Palestine refugees

1. At its 29th meeting, on 23 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 24, Palestine refugees, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 24)).

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration thereof.

Discussion

3. Support was expressed for the programme of work under the section.

4. The need for the international community to continue to provide assistance to the Palestine refugees through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was emphasized.

5. UNRWA's role in empowering women under its small-scale enterprise programme was commended and concern was expressed about the reduction in university scholarships awarded to refugee students owing to reduced contributions.

6. It was stressed that the realization of a just, comprehensive and long-lasting solution to the problem of Palestine refugees is of paramount importance for the alleviation of the plight of the Palestine refugees.

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7. Concern was expressed that the level of resources from the regular budget would remain unchanged during the next biennium. It was noted that the proposed increase in voluntary contributions was somewhat optimistic in view of the difficulties for UNRWA to mobilize such resources.

8. Appreciation for the support given by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in providing educational and health services to the Palestine refugees was expressed.

9. The view was expressed that the expected accomplishments included in this section were too vague and general to enable any credible assessment of the programme performance at the end of the biennium. The view was also expressed that the formulation of expected accomplishments in some activities is not feasible.

Conclusions and recommendations

10. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 24, Palestine refugees, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.